

## Stultz, Mark

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**From:** Mike Rolband [MRolband@wetlandstudies.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 06, 2010 10:20 AM  
**To:** Stultz, Mark; Milton Herd  
**Subject:** WIP and Buffers  
**Attachments:** Descriptions\_InputDeckLevelsPractices.pdf

Mark and Milt:

I thought that this page 62 of the WIP would be of interest to the stakeholders as it defines the agricultural area buffers to be 35 ft along streams shown as perennial on the USGS maps (using the pre- 1994 maps that show such streams as a solid blue line. FYI - In 1994 USGS switched to using thin blue lines for perennial and this one's for intermittent).

Mike

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## ***Descriptions of Input Deck Levels and Practices***

- **Nutrient Management:** Nutrient management plans are already required for VPDES and VPA confined livestock and poultry permits and for biosolids application sites. The state will consider broader incentives and requirements for nutrient management plans if needed, written by Virginia certified nutrient management planners, to cover 90 percent of available cropland, specialty crops and hay with implementation by 2017 and 95% by 2025. This action is necessary to achieve implemented nutrient management on 95 percent of the available cropland, specialty crops, and hay acreage.

Since pasture acres are frequently under fertilized unless manure or biosolids are used, the Commonwealth will not focus efforts on pastures that receive only commercial fertilizer. Nutrient management plans will be expected on all pasture receiving biosolids or manures.

A phased in approach focusing on the largest farms first would help ease the burden on producers, allowing more adjustment time for the smaller operations and spreading technical service provider workload over a longer period of time. Federal and state financial incentives to help defray costs for the nutrient management component of resource management plans developed by certified individuals. This will assist producers in transitioning to a system where nutrient management plans are expected.

- **Vegetative Buffers (grass and forest):** To achieve 95 percent implementation of 35' forest and grass buffers on crop and hay lands it will be necessary to pursue an expectation for buffers. Otherwise, it could be incorporated as a component of state resource management plans. Farmers would have the option to choose between grass and forested buffers, with grass buffers being the minimum expected. Federal or state incentives could be provided to encourage producers to "upgrade" to a forested buffer. The Commonwealth believes that fulfillment of grass and forest buffers on 30 percent of pastures that border riparian waterways can be achieved through farmer participation in financial incentive programs, assuming there is a concurrent commitment for livestock stream exclusion. Implementation of such buffers could begin during the 2011-2017 period, but would not be expected to reach maximum implementation until the 2017 to 2025 period.

Such buffers would only be required along perennial surface waters (blue line features on pre-1994 USGS topographic maps), unless a farmer chose to use the phosphorus index to determine phosphorus applications, in which case buffers or application setbacks from intermittent streams would also be required if needed to justify a specific rate of phosphorus application.

- **Conservation Tillage and Soil Conservation Plans:** At the level of 90 percent implementation of conservation tillage on cropland and 95 percent for soil conservation plans on cropland, hay, and pasture, it will be necessary to establish an expectation for implemented soil conservation plans to achieve a maximum soil loss rate of "T," as defined by USDA-NRCS as the tolerable rate of soil loss expressed as tons per acre. In addition to this being incorporated into resource management plans, other structural practices such as grass waterways will be needed.